



2017 - 2018  
**FEDERAL  
LEGISLATIVE  
AGENDA**



## **2017-2018 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA**

### **MAYOR**

Jennifer W. Roberts

### **MAYOR PRO TEM**

Vi Lyles

### **CITY COUNCIL**

Dimple Ajmera

Al Austin

Ed Driggs

Julie Eiselt

Claire Fallon

Patsy Kinsey

LaWana Mayfield

James Mitchell

Greg Phipps

Kenny Smith



## **2017 – 2018 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA**

### **Airport Control Tower**

- Continue working with the Congress and the Administration to commission the new Airport Control Tower

### **2030 Transit System Plan**

- Continue working with the Congress and the Administration to secure federal resources for the build-out of the 2030 Transit Corridor System Plan

### **North End Smart District**

- Explore partnerships with the private and not-for-profit sectors and colleges and universities in identifying and securing federal resources for the development of the North End Smart District

### **Doppler Weather Radar**

- Support the efforts of our Congressional Delegation to secure a federal Doppler Weather Radar facility that meets the public safety needs of our region

### **Municipal Bonds**

- Work with the Congress and the Administration in support of the municipal bond tax exemption



## 2017-2018 Federal Legislative Agenda

<b>Issue:</b>	Airport Control Tower
<b>Position:</b>	Continue working with the Congress and the Administration to commission the new Airport Control Tower
<b>Staff Resource:</b>	Brent Cagle, Aviation, 704.359.4035

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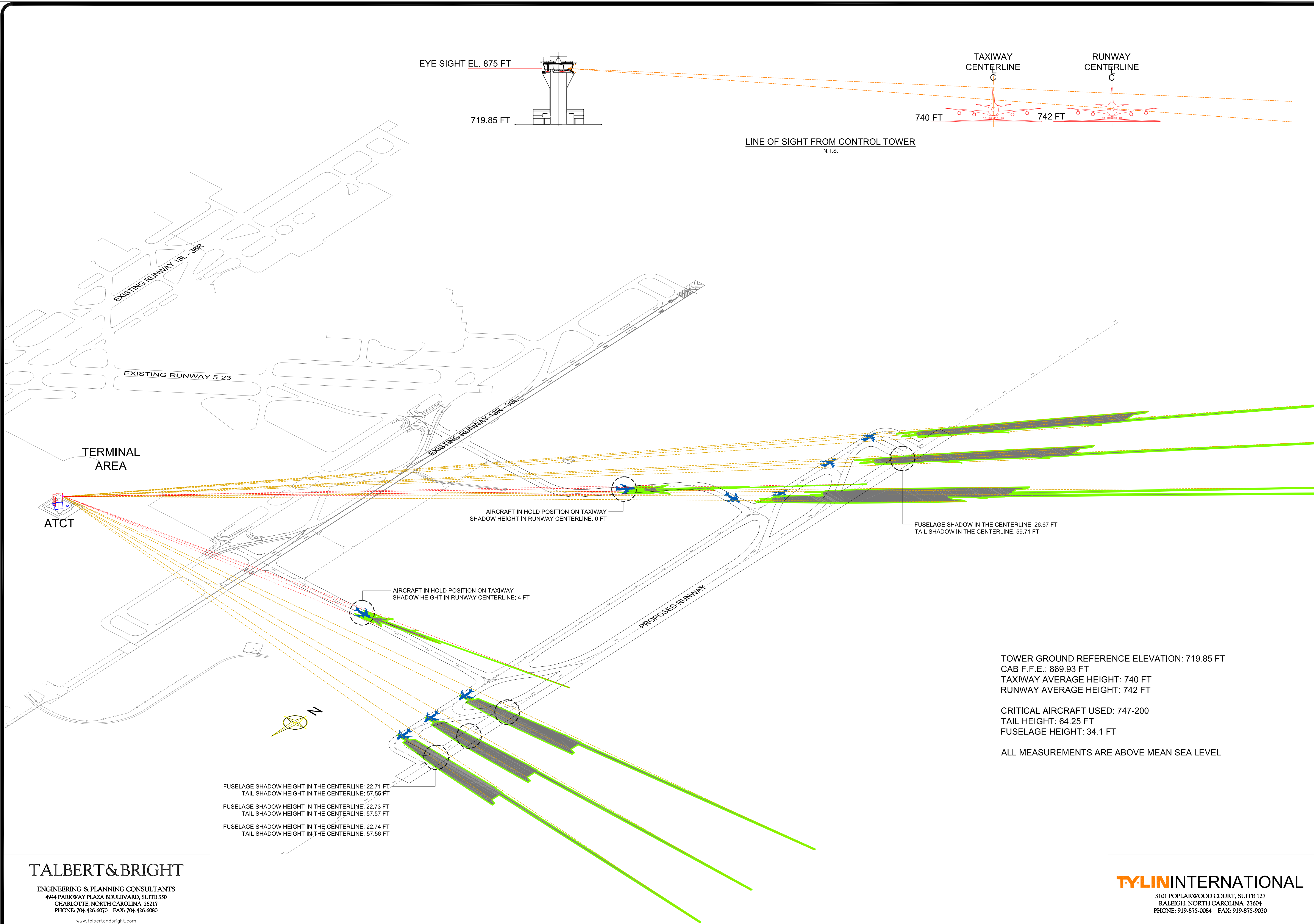
**Background and History:** The existing airport control tower at Charlotte Douglas International Airport was constructed in 1979 and stands 155 feet above ground level. The tower has a 525 square foot controller cab, which accommodates a maximum seven controllers at a time. From this tower, the Federal Aviation Administration controlled 224,324 aircraft operations in 1979. Entering 2016, the airport has grown into the fifth busiest airport in the nation, controlling approximately 543,944 aircraft operations in 2015. That number is forecasted to grow to approximately 748,000 by 2040. The existing volume of activity alone renders the tower inadequate and unable to handle the level of operations projected for the future. Moreover, the existing tower is too low and in the wrong position to permit adequate visual contact between the controllers and the aircraft operating from the existing and planned runways.

Based upon this information, the Federal Aviation Administration programmed the replacement of the tower and commenced design of a replacement tower to be located on a site south of the American Airlines maintenance hangar. The site was chosen as it permits controllers to have adequate visual contact with aircraft operating from the existing and planned runways. The cost of the new tower is approximately \$60 million. The tower will stand 370 feet above ground level and will have an 850 square foot controller cab. The 42,000 square-foot base building will house an expanded terminal radar approach control (TRACON), with space for future growth. Training rooms, administrative offices, and a power distribution supply system will also be in the base building, along with the latest aviation security and air traffic simulation capabilities.

**Current Need/Problem (including potential allies or detractors):** The Federal Aviation Administration allocated funding for construction of the tower and commenced construction in early 2016. Construction of the new tower and base building is scheduled for completion in 2018, upon which outfitting of the new tower with the necessary equipment will commence. The new tower is scheduled to be commissioned in 2020. However, funding for outfitting the new tower has not been appropriated. The cost of outfitting is estimated at \$52 million.


The local business community, including the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce and the major airlines serving the Airport, strongly supports commissioning of a new airport control tower.

**Impact if Adopted:** If funding for outfitting the new airport control tower is appropriated on a timely basis, then the new tower can be commissioned by 2020 and the airfield will be used to its fullest extent thereby improving the provision of air service to and from the Charlotte region.



REVISIONS	DATE
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2	
3	
4	
5	

DESIGNED BY:	N/A
PROJECT ENG.:	N/A
PROJECT NO.:	550704.00
DRAWN BY:	JV
CHECKED BY:	RAW
DATE ISSUED:	3/29/2007



**Charlotte-Douglas**  
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

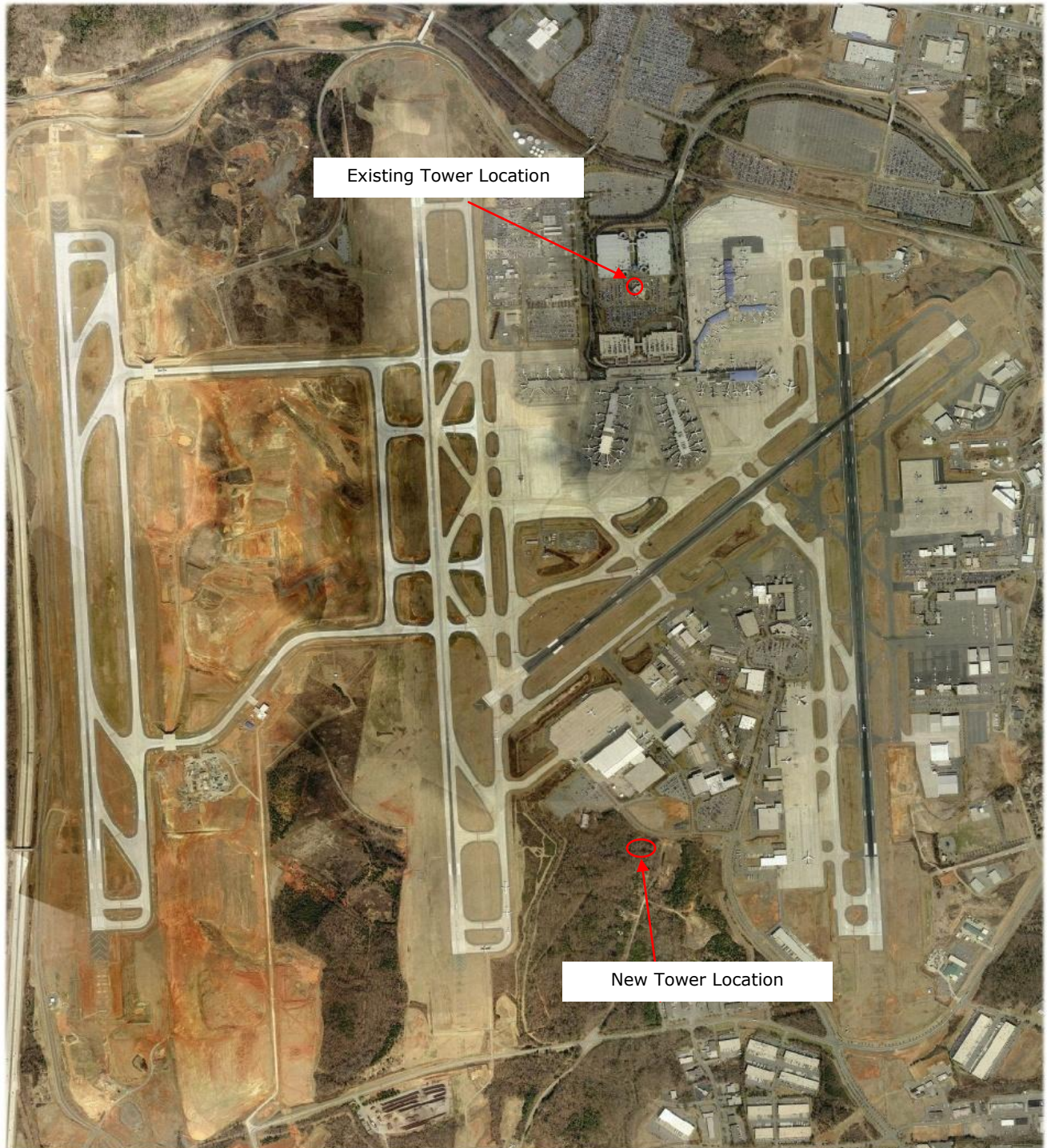
SHADOW STUDY	SCALE: 1:500
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OF	1

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## EXHIBIT – CLT AIRFIELD LAYOUT





## 2017-2018 Federal Legislative Agenda

<b>Issue:</b>	2030 Transit System Plan
<b>Position:</b>	Continue working with Congress and the Administration to secure federal resources for the build-out of the 2030 Transit System Plan
<b>Staff Resource:</b>	John Lewis, Transit, 704.336.3855

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**Background and History:** The Charlotte Area Transit System continues to implement the regional 2030 Transit Corridor System Plan to develop primary transportation corridors, linking our area's key centers of economic activity. The Plan supports development of pedestrian-friendly urban neighborhoods with a mixture of land uses, offers people a choice in meeting their mobility needs, increases transit's share of the local travel market, reduces the region's dependence on overloaded and gridlocked roads, eases air and noise pollution and enhances the overall quality of life in the region.

The successful LYNX Blue Line - South Corridor project has generated approximately \$1.45 billion of new or announced investment along the 9.6 mile alignment and continues an average daily ridership of 15,000. The LYNX Blue Line Extension, which is under construction and will open for revenue service in summer 2017, has already generated \$400 million of investment that is either under construction or has been announced. The CityLYNX Gold Line Phase 2 project will enter construction in early 2017 and is scheduled to open for revenue service in 2020. The Charlotte Gateway Station rights-of-way have been secured by the City and Phase 1 tracks, structures and signals work will begin in 2017.

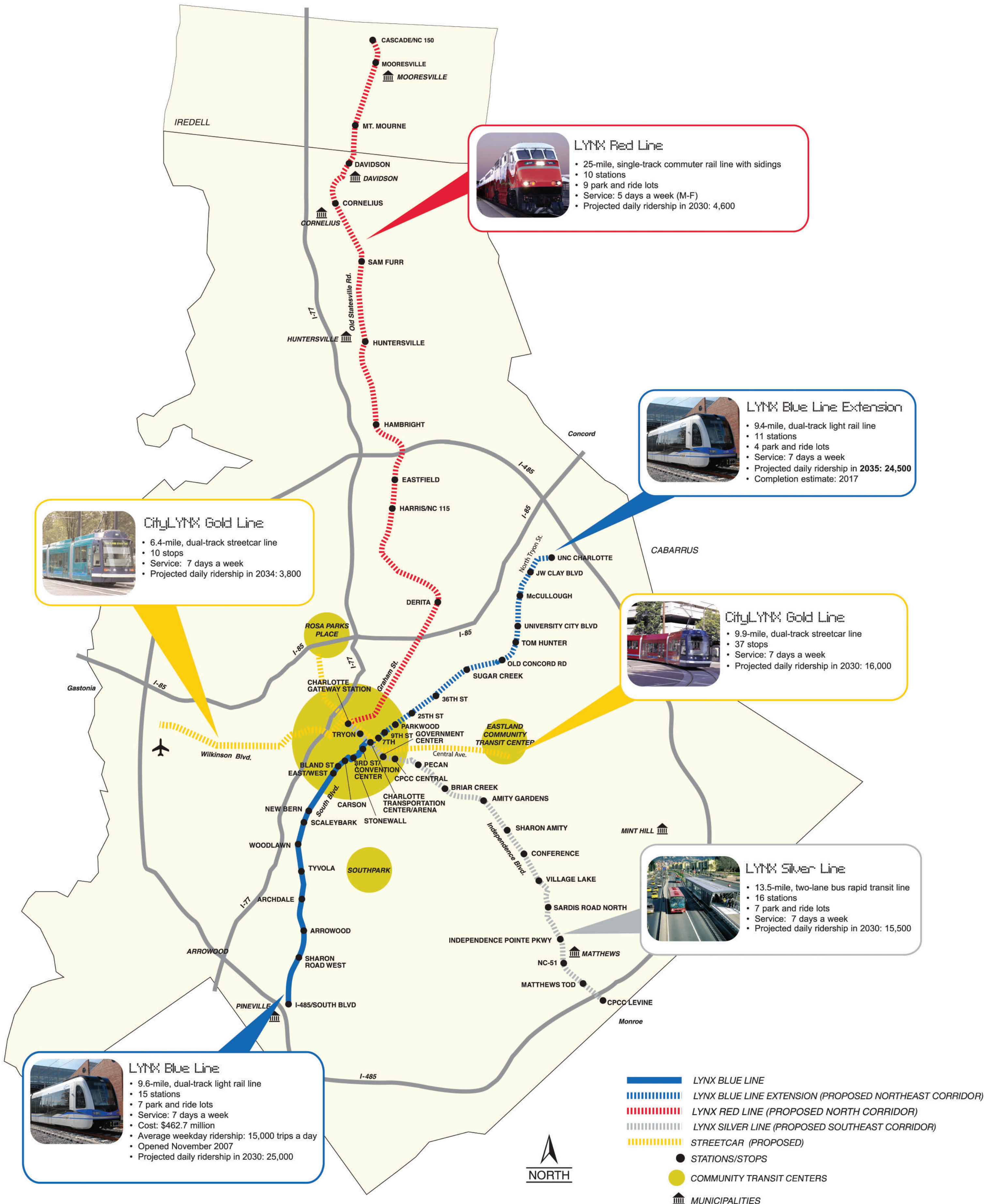
**Current Need/Problem (including potential allies or detractors):** The Charlotte Area Transit System is developing or constructing the LYNX Blue Line Extension, CityLYNX Gold Line – Phase 2, and Charlotte Gateway Station. A corridor has been defined and the preferred local rail alternative adopted for the LYNX Silver Line. All of the projects are part of the 2030 Transit System Plan. The projects either utilize or propose to partially utilize federal resources for their deployment.

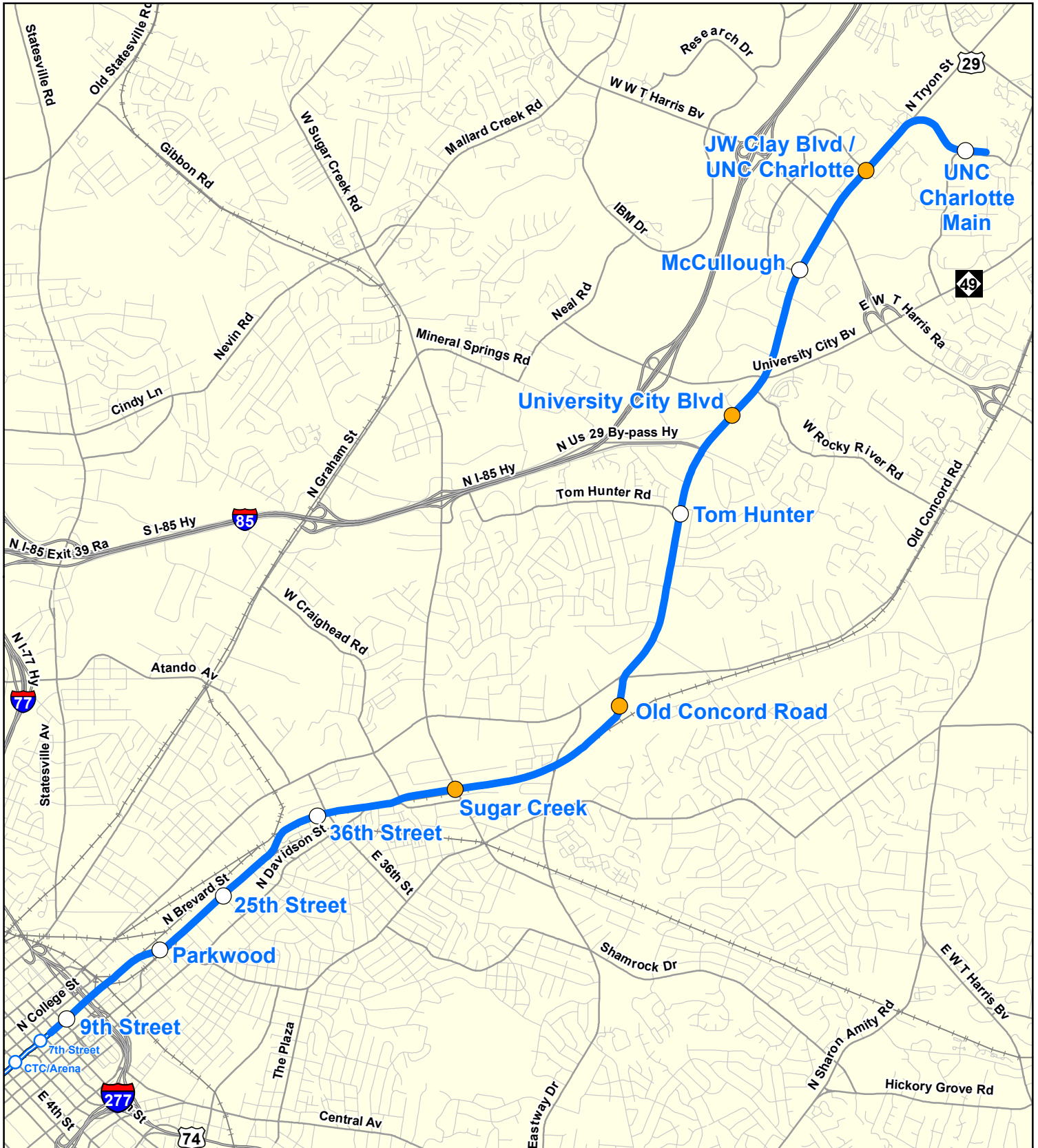
For the FY 2018 federal budget, the City is seeking the final federal appropriation for the LYNX Blue Line Extension project of approximately \$74.25 million. The federal government signed a Full Funding Grant Agreement for the project in 2012, which is funded from the Capital Investment Grants New Starts program.

The local business community, including the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce supports the build-out of the Metropolitan Transit Commission's 2030 Transit Corridor System Plan.

**Impact if Adopted:** The provision of federal resources for the build-out and operation of the Metropolitan Transit Commission's 2030 Transit Corridor System Plan will enable the region to implement its public transportation vision as well as implement a balanced regional highway and transit network supported by the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization and the State of North Carolina.

# 2030 Transit System Plan





**Legend**

LYNX Blue Line Extension



Alignment



Station



Station with Park and Ride



LYNX Blue Line



LYNX Blue Line Station



Interstate



Road



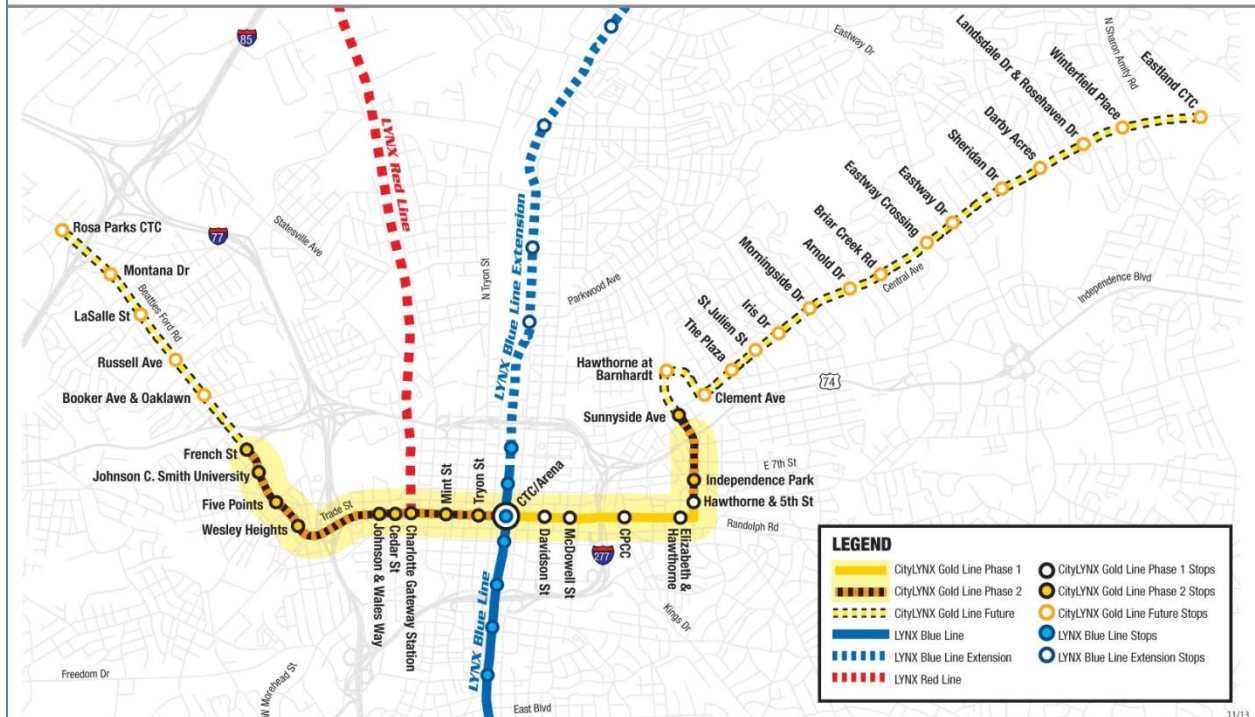
Railroads



0 0.5 1 Miles

Data Source: CATS, City of Charlotte

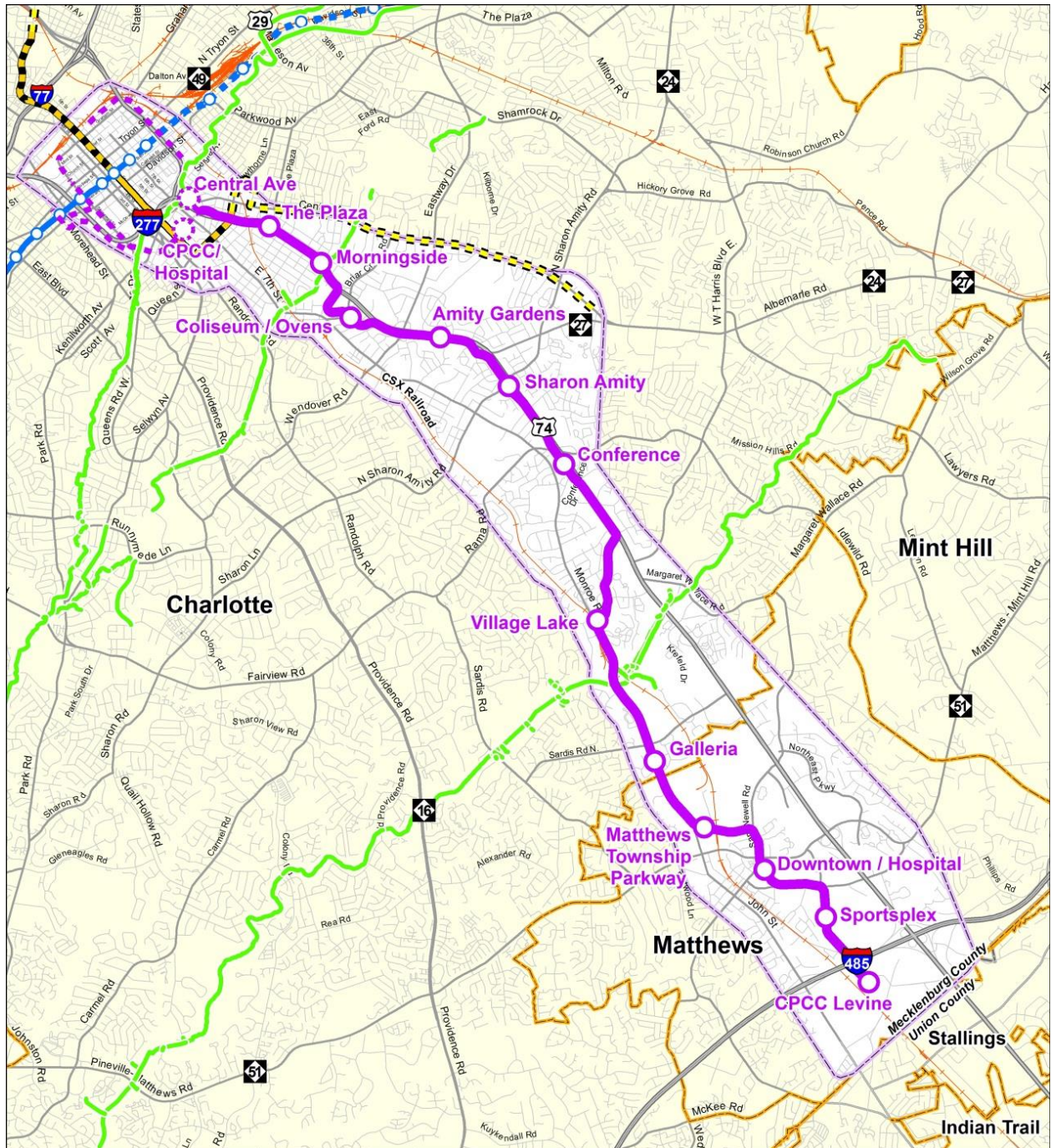
# CityLYNX GOLD LINE CORRIDOR



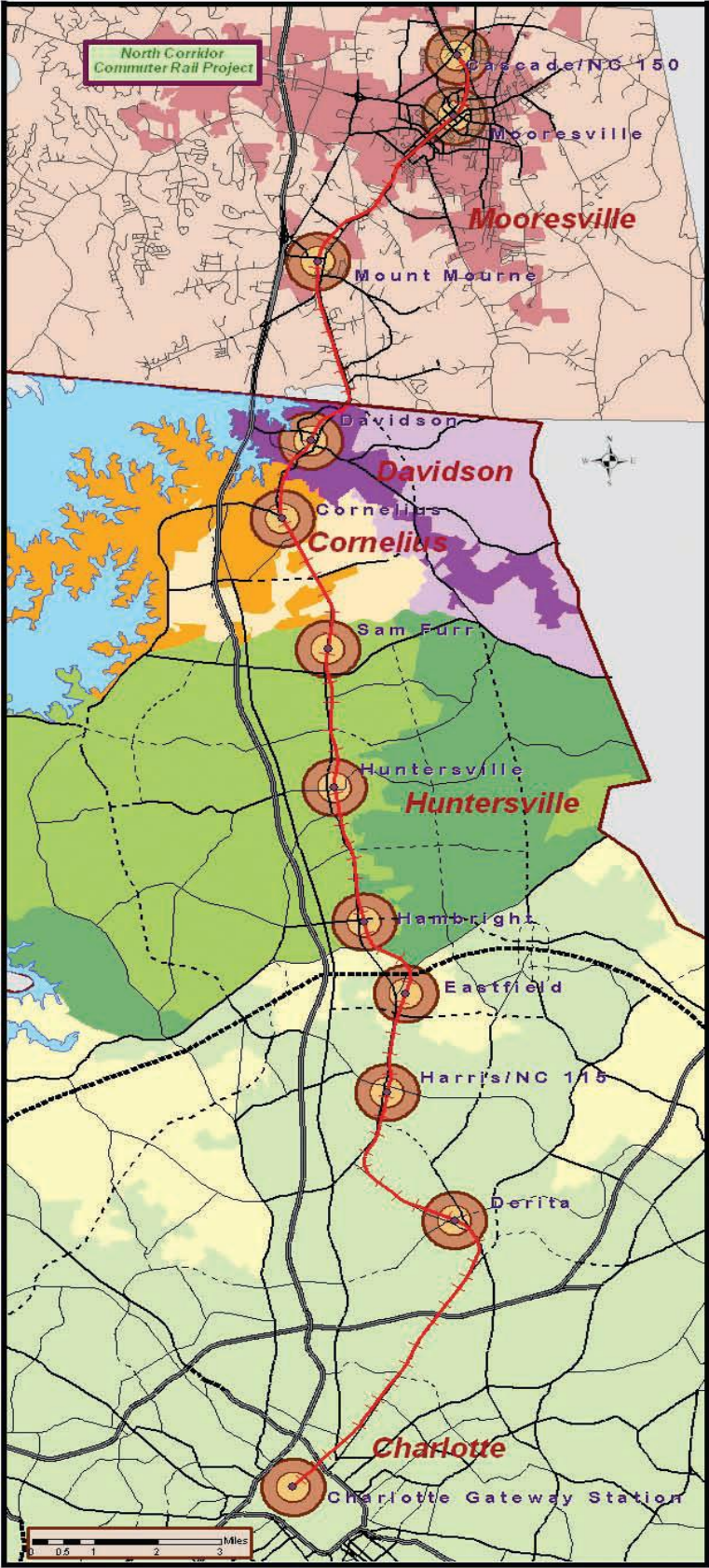
704-336-RIDE (7433) • [www.ridetransit.org](http://www.ridetransit.org)



## LYNX Silver Line



**LYNX RED LINE CORRIDOR**



## Charlotte Gateway Station





## 2017-2018 Federal Legislative Agenda

<b>Issue:</b>	North End Smart District
<b>Position:</b>	Explore partnerships with the private and not-for-profit sectors and colleges and universities in identifying and securing federal resources for the development of the North End Smart District
<b>Staff Resource:</b>	Rob Phocas, City Managers Office, 704.336.7558

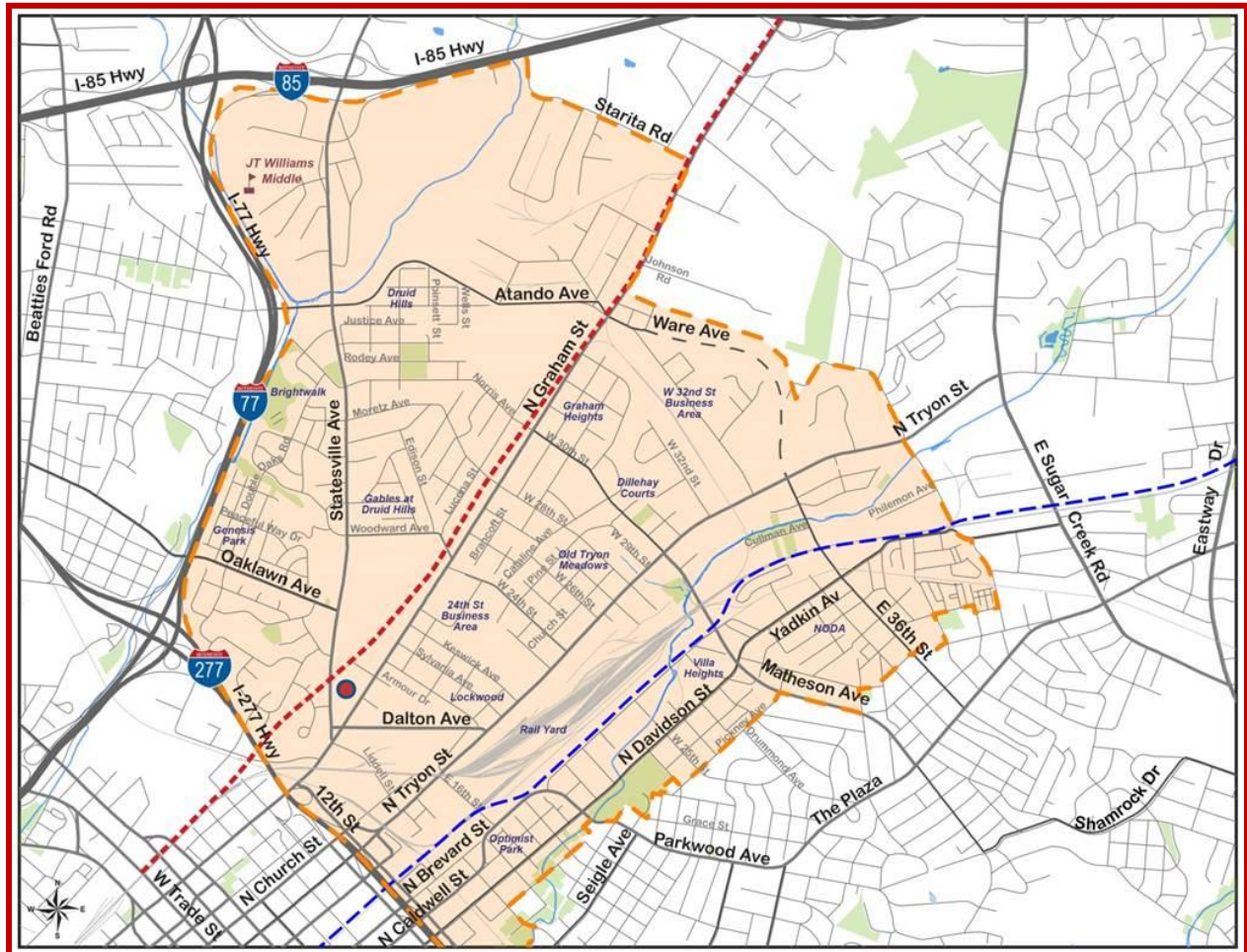
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**Background and History:** The City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, and Charlotte Center City Partners worked together to create the Charlotte Center City 2020 Vision Plan (Plan), a comprehensive plan that provides “a big picture framework and unifying vision for Uptown growth and development.” The Plan endorses targeted economic growth and industry recruitment in an Applied Innovation Corridor (AIC), which extends from Center City to the University of North Carolina Charlotte. The Plan’s strategy draws on the development momentum that exists in Uptown and the South End and is modeled after the emerging practice of urban “innovation districts” being applied in cities across the world. Future investment and redevelopment are envisioned to link and leverage Charlotte’s academic and research capital with its business assets, emerging industries, and governmental support. The primary goal is to foster job growth in future “21st-century” industries and clusters, including energy production and infrastructure, biosciences, information technology, smart city programs and healthcare. The AIC strategy is also intended to attract entrepreneurial startups and business expansion in innovative industries to catalyze further investment in mixed-use and mixed-income housing and commercial development.

**Current Need/Problem (including potential allies or detractors):** A significant opportunity exists in the AIC, in an area known as the North End Smart District (NESD). Located in an area bordered by Interstate 77, Atando Avenue, and North Davidson Street, the NESD is in close proximity to Uptown, easy freight movement, future light-rail access (August 2017), quick connections to Uptown’s major transportation centers, new pedestrian and bicycle connections, and existing affordable and workforce housing. This area is the site of several “smart city” projects the City is developing through public-private and academic partnerships. The City and its partners intend to use big data and smart technologies/innovations in the residential, commercial and light industrial sectors to create a platform on which redevelopment and economic growth can occur. In addition to economic growth, the City and its partners intend to minimize the environmental impact to the community and build human capital. The deployment of microgrids, gigabit broadband service, smart energy efficiency tools and the creation of a living laboratory where companies can co-locate and co-create will help to spawn an urban innovation district. Federal level financial support, in the form of grant funds and technical assistance, is needed to facilitate the development and creation of the NESD.

**Impact if Adopted:** If Federal agencies provided funds and extended their technical expertise to develop and implement the North End Smart District, Charlotte will be able to revitalize this area using 21<sup>st</sup> century smart city programs and projects.

# North End Smart District





## 2017-2018 Federal Legislative Agenda

<b>Issue:</b>	Doppler Weather Radar
<b>Position:</b>	Support the efforts of our Congressional Delegation to secure a federal Doppler Weather Radar facility that meets the public safety needs of our region
<b>Staff Resource:</b>	Rich Granger, Fire, 704.336.8802

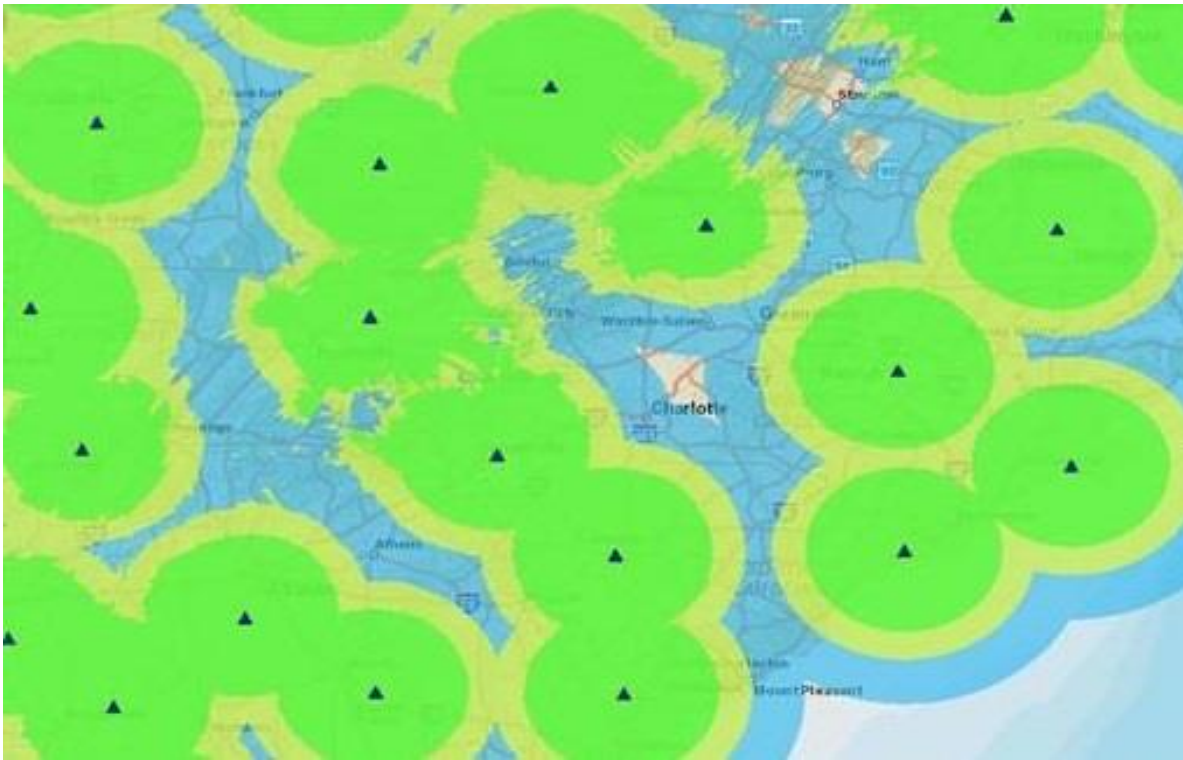
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**Background and History:** In 2012, the Charlotte area experienced a tornado that damaged 192 homes. The National Weather Service was unable to provide advance warning as the nearest Doppler Weather Radar it operates did not detect the rotation in the thunderstorms. A contributing factor to the inability to detect the rotation is that the radar is located 94 miles from Charlotte in Greer, South Carolina. The location results in a majority of the Charlotte metropolitan area being without radar beam coverage below 10,000 feet. Due to the circumference of the earth the further a radar is away from a given point, the higher the radar beam scans the atmosphere leading to lower resolutions and an inability to detect the low-level dynamics of severe weather. The neighboring counties of Cabarrus, Rowan and Davidson have an even more pronounced problem with limited radar coverage as the Greer radar is even further away.

**Current Need/Problem (including potential allies or detractors):** Several local meteorologists agree that the current Doppler location is insufficient and do not give meteorologists the tools they need to detect severe weather and warn citizens accordingly. These meteorologists believe that the lack of a Doppler radar in our region contributed to the lack of advance warning for the tornado that effected Mecklenburg, Rowan and Cabarrus counties in 2012 that damaged the 192 homes. The City of Charlotte is one of two cities in the United States of over 700,000 population without a Doppler radar within 55 miles of the City, the other being Columbus, Ohio. Due to the increasing population of the region, the absence of Doppler radar will place even more people and structures in a perilous position during periods of severe weather.

**Impact if Adopted:** If a Doppler Weather Radar is located with sufficient coverage of the Charlotte metropolitan area, then the National Weather Service will be in a better position to forecast severe weather in the region.

**Gap in Quality Radar Coverage over Charlotte**  
Courtesy of Brad Panovich, Chief Meteorologist WCNC-TV



**Green areas have adequate radar coverage**  
**Blue areas illustrate gaps in radar coverage**

Dear Senator Burr,

I would like to send my support for your legislation to have a National Weather Service Nexrad Doppler radar cover the Piedmont of North Carolina. As the Chief Meteorologist at NBC Charlotte, I cannot tell you the amount of times the lack of weather radar coverage has impact severe weather warnings.

One event in March of 2012 sick out as a prime example where the lack of quality radar coverage played a part in a tornado warning not being issued as an EF-2 tornado touched down. This tornado thankfully did not cause a fatality but did throw two young boys onto a new interstate.

I cannot stress enough the need for radar coverage in one of the country's fastest growing regions here in the Carolinas. Not only would this provide government forecasters better information on severe weather but numerous private sector meteorologist and aviation interests in the region.

Thank you for bringing this legislation to the floor. There are many things people argue about in politics and the role of government in our lives. I cannot think of anyone on either side of the aisle who cannot support this role as providing severe weather coverage for them and their families.

Sincerely,

Brad Panovich

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brad Panovich', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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[bpanovich@wcnc.com](mailto:bpanovich@wcnc.com)



One Julian Price Place  
Charlotte, NC 28208

Phone 704 374-3500

Tuesday, June 2, 2015

The Honorable Richard Burr  
217 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Burr:

Thank you for your time. I want to commend Mr. Van Denton, Chief Meteorologist at WGHP-TV in High Point, NC for calling to your attention a very important public safety issue regarding the inadequate weather radar coverage currently in place across western North Carolina (NC). I am contacting you to both endorse Mr. Denton's concerns and add a few additional facts that will hopefully crystallize the gravity of the situation.

Our predicament began in the mid 1990s when the National Weather Service (NWS) modernization took place and our older WSR-74 radars were replaced by the newer WSR-88D (Doppler) radars. In doing so, Charlotte - one of the biggest cities and busiest airports in the country - lost its radar with no plans to replace it. North Carolina was allocated three new radars. The sites were, and still are Raleigh, Wilmington, and Morehead City. In other words, the three new radars were all positioned along and east of the I-95 corridor with the western 2/3rds of NC left behind. Why? My understanding is the modernization was funded by both NOAA and the DoD. Because of that, and understandably, the military was given first choice to ensure their bases were well covered. But it also used up the state's quota, and no money remained for the western side of NC.

As an example of how out of balance things are, let's take Clinton, NC as an example. Have you heard of it? I haven't prior to this, but I'm sure it is a very nice community. They are within just 40 (nautical) miles of Raleigh, 60nm from Wilmington, and 70nm from Morehead City. That's outstanding coverage from not one, but a network of three different weather radars. By contrast, using Raleigh as the nearest (and only) site available, Charlotte is 118nm away, Statesville 117nm, Hickory 139nm and Morganton 155nm!

Senator Ernest Hollings in South Carolina faced a similar situation with yet another radar installed along his coast and only one radar allocated inland, Columbia, SC. He understood that plan would leave the western region of his state poorly covered and fought for another weather radar in the Greenville-Spartanburg (GSP) area. He won. And by pure luck, that radar helped fill some of the gaping holes in western NC.

In short our region improved from virtually no adequate coverage to fringe coverage. Charlotte is now 70 (nautical) miles away from the GSP site and Statesville is 85nm away. Meanwhile Winston-Salem still remains 90nm away from Raleigh. So while tiny communities in rural eastern NC are blanketed by a network of radar coverage, larger cities in western NC still remain on the fringe, despite help from Senator Hollings.

As Mr. Denton pointed out, increased distance from a radar site results in a multiplicity of problems. Here are just a few of the basics:

1. Radar beam height increases with distance
2. Radar beam width increases with distance
3. Radar beam attenuation increases with distance

With respect to beam height, as it stands now, the beam centroid that passes over Charlotte is 7,500<sup>[1]</sup> feet above the earth. For Statesville, it is 9,400<sup>[1]</sup> feet and at Winston-Salem it is 10,650<sup>[1]</sup> feet. As you can see that is over two miles of atmosphere left uncovered from the beam centroid down to the ground.

The average tornado drops from a cloud base no higher than 4,000 feet off the ground, so you can appreciate the profound difficulty here. Yes, these (supercell) thunderstorms do produce broader rotations above the tornado which allows the radar operator to infer a tornado below, but it still boils down to guesswork, and that is why, even in this day and age, we still have a 75% false alarm rate when the NWS issues tornado warnings.<sup>[2]</sup>

Beam width is a problem. Just like a flashlight, as the beam gets farther away from the transmitter, it spreads out and becomes much wider. Therefore, because a distant storm from the radar only fills part of the (wide) radar beam, it appears weaker to the radar operator and he may underestimate the strength of the storm leaving the people affected by it vulnerable.<sup>[3]</sup>

On the third point, if rain or storms lie between the radar transmitter and the distant storm in question, the nearby storms will attenuate the beam signal thereby leaving less energy to reach the distant storm which again will distort the final result and negatively affect the operator's ability to accurately interpret the situation.

**To reiterate, all these problems are a direct result of greater distance from weather radar sites.**

Finally, several years ago, the FAA did install a Terminal Doppler Weather Radar (TDWR) to help better serve the aviation community around the Charlotte Airport. It is designed to quickly capture small weather events in the terminal airspace which is a rather small useful radius. This radar, on some level, does complement the coverage of the larger NWS radars, but it offers fewer derived products, and because of its lower power and smaller wavelength, it is severely hampered by attenuation even within its smaller designated coverage area.<sup>[4][5]</sup>

The tornado that struck Harrisburg, NC on 3 March 2012 at 2:30am (Mecklenburg/Cabarrus line) left 41 homes uninhabitable, six completely destroyed, four people injured, but incredibly, no deaths. The tornado was rated a strong EF2 tornado<sup>[6][7]</sup>.

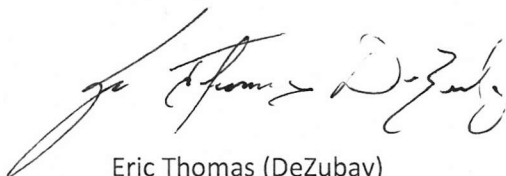
This tornado went undetected and no warning was issued for the victims in the path. ***The tornado was only 13 miles from the TDWR.*** This should serve to illustrate why depending on terminal doppler weather radars is not the solution.

In light of all the issues laid out, I simply wish to affirm and stand behind Mr. Denton's request for an additional NWS Doppler Radar to be installed in a location that will provide vastly improved, timely and critical weather information for the western half of North Carolina which comprises major metropolitan areas.

If you have any further questions or comments, please feel free to call or write the undersigned. Thank you again for your valuable time.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely yours,



Eric Thomas (DeZubay)  
Chief Meteorologist  
WBTV (CBS)  
1 Julian Price Place  
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Office: 704-374-3935  
ethomas@wbtv.com

### References:

- [1] <http://www.wdtb.noaa.gov/tools/misc/beamwidth/beamwidth.html>
- [2] <http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/three-out-of-every-four-tornado-warnings-are-false-alarms/>
- [3] [http://www.srh.noaa.gov/jetstream/doppler/beam\\_max.htm](http://www.srh.noaa.gov/jetstream/doppler/beam_max.htm)
- [4] <http://www.wunderground.com/blog/JeffMasters/comment.html?entrynum=1168>
- [5] <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/gsp/tdwr/info/specs.html>
- [6] <http://www.spc.noaa.gov/faq/tornado/ef-scale.html>
- [7] <http://1.usa.gov/1HP8UZ9>



May 20, 2015

Dear Senator Burr:

Thank you for looking into this serious issue which we discussed a few months ago during your visit to our television station. As you now know from research, the curve of the earth and distance of the radar sites in Greer, Blacksburg, Columbia and Raleigh, leaves the area from near Charlotte to Winston-Salem insufficiently protected. These radars cannot see rotation below 8000 feet (even 10,000 feet in the extreme locations). This even led to a tornado being undetected on the northeast side of Charlotte on March 3, 2012 at 2:30 a.m. People were hurt and there was no warning. Someone could have been killed. One day without action we will not be so lucky.

We know from experience major tornadoes can and do strike this area. Between the Charlotte metro and Triad metro, there are more than 3 million people. This area desperately needs better radar coverage. To best serve the areas lacking adequate coverage, I would recommend the radar be located near Salisbury, NC (Rowan County). This would also help serve the Hickory area, which is also in a similar situation.

Thank you for serving the people of North Carolina.

Sincerely,

Van Denton  
Chief Meteorologist  
WGHP FOX8  
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High Point, NC 27263  
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## 2017-2018 Federal Legislative Agenda

<b>Issue:</b>	Municipal Bonds
<b>Position:</b>	Work with the Congress and the Administration in support of the municipal bond tax exemption
<b>Staff Resource(s):</b>	Randy Harrington, Management & Financial Services, 704.336.5013

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**Background and History:** Municipal bonds are the primary way States and local governments finance the public infrastructure that supports everyday life. In the case of the City of Charlotte, bonds finance construction of roads, sidewalks, airports, transit systems, water treatment facilities, stormwater facilities, housing, and many other public projects. Voters and governmental bodies approve issuance of these bonds, which are then purchased by private investors such as individuals, mutual funds and financial institutions. The interest earned by these investors is exempt from the federal income tax, and has been since the federal income tax was instituted in 1913. Since the interest earned is not taxable, investors are willing to accept a lower interest rate on tax-exempt bonds that results in lower costs to States and local governments. As the Administration and Congress look for ways to reduce the federal deficit and continue to fund programs, the federal income tax exemption for municipal bond interest is under consideration for repeal. If the federal income tax exemption is eliminated or limited, then States and local governments will provide less infrastructure investment, create fewer jobs, and place a greater burden on citizens forced to pay higher fees and taxes.

**Current Need/Problem (including potential allies or detractors):** Legislative proposals are circulating to repeal the federal tax exemption for municipal bond interest. The effect of repealing this exemption is that States and local governments would have to pay higher rates of interest on their borrowing to remain attractive to investors. If all of the City's tax exempt debt had been taxable in FY 2015 the annual fiscal impact upon the City of Charlotte would have been approximately \$38 million. The additional cost will require the City to reevaluate its capital investment spending and consider the possibility of enacting higher property taxes or higher user fees to make up the difference or curtailing spending on such projects.

The "Big 7" non-partisan, non-profit organizations supporting States and local governments (National League of Cities, National Association of Counties, International City/County Management Association, U.S. Conference of Mayors, Council of State Governments, National Governor's Association, and National Conference of State Legislatures) support the retention of the municipal bond tax exemption.

**Impact if Adopted:** If municipal bonds were taxable, the higher interest amounts paid by the City in FY2015 would have totaled approximately \$38 million. Since two-thirds of all public infrastructure projects in the United States are financed by municipal bonds, enacting policies that negatively impact the construction of infrastructure would be counterproductive to our residents and visitors to the City.

**115<sup>th</sup> US CONGRESS**  
**2017-2018 MECKLENBURG FEDERAL DELEGATION**

**US Senate**

**Richard M. Burr (R-Sr.)**

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**CHARLOTTE™**

**2015-2017 MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL**

**Jennifer W. Roberts**

**Mayor**

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[Biography](#)

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**Vi Lyles**

**Mayor Pro Tem**

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[Biography](#)

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**Julie Eiselt**

**At-Large Representative**

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[Biography](#)

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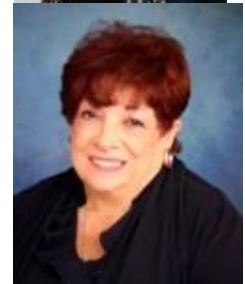
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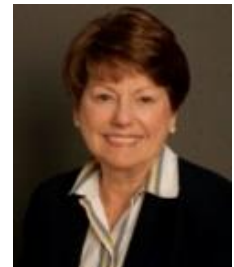
**Patsy Kinsey**

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704-352-7305 (City Cell)



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704-574-7226 (City Cell)



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**Kenny Smith**  
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